

CALFED OPERATIONS COORDINATION GROUP
January 17, 2001 MEETING NOTES AND ACTION ITEMS

Review of December 6 meeting notes

No revisions were made to the December 6, 2000, CALFED Ops meeting notes.

Announcements

The following handouts were provided at the meeting:

1. Spring Head of Old River Barrier Installation, January 9, 2001, DWR, Mark Holderman
2. CALFED Environmental Water Account Acquisition Status, January 17, 2001, DWR, Leo Winternitz
3. Management Agencies concurrence letter, January 11, 2001, DWR, Leo Winternitz
4. Interim Protocols for Environmental Water Account Operations during 2001, January 11, 2001, DWR, Leo Winternitz
5. RST Catch of Chinook Salmon at Deer & Mill Creeks and Knights Landing, January 17, 2000, DFG, Jim White
6. Number of Fish Caught at GCID, Butte Creek, Sacramento River Area Beach Seines, Sacramento River at Sacramento Trawl, and Chipps Island, DWR, Sheila Greene
7. CALFED Operations Briefing Package, January 17, 2001, DWR, John Leahigh
8. Year 2001 CVP/SWP Operations Plan, revised January 17, 2001, DWR, John Leahigh
9. Winter-run Chinook Salmon, Steelhead, and Spring-run Chinook Update, January 17, 2001, NMFS, Bruce Oppenheim

Long Range Meteorological Forecast

Only a 20% chance of having a normal year is anticipated for this year given the current conditions to date. This last November-December period was the 9th driest in 81 years of record.

Temporary Barriers

DWR is in consultation with the Corps of Engineers to discuss meeting higher VAMP flows. An Operations Plan has been developed. An Operations Schedule is being discussed with the Department of Fish and Game. An adaptive management approach is being taken to deal with the water quality, fisheries, and water level

issues in the South Delta. The next meeting is Friday, January 19th. Recommendations are expected to be ready in February. The White Paper on the Spring Head of Old River Installation was distributed at the last VAMP meeting. DWR has been investigating raising the HOR barrier height to 11 feet MSL.

Environmental Water Account Implementation

A table showing the EWA asset acquisition status was distributed and discussed. A copy of the Management Agencies concurrence letter was also distributed. A provisional copy of 4 interim protocols for EWA operations during 2001 was also handed out and could be discussed at the next CALFED Ops meeting.

OFF and DAT Update

DAT has been having frequent conference calls discussing fish, Delta Cross Channel gate operation, and project operations. On Saturday, January 13th, fish triggers lead to the closing of the Delta Cross Channel gates on Sunday. As part of a fish experiment, beginning today, combined SWP/CVP exports will be limited to 6,000 cfs and then further reduced to 3,000 cfs for another fish test using radio tagged fish in the southern Delta. Charts of chinook salmon at various locations above the Delta were distributed and discussed.

OPERATIONS

CVP/SWP Operations Status:

The current State and Federal reservoir levels and export rates were presented as per the CALFED Operations Briefing Package handout. The Delta Cross Channel gates are now closed. The Projects are pumping 6,000 and 3,000 cfs this week in response to juvenile chinook presence and a migration experiment respectively. Releases to the Feather River are being ramped down to 1,750 cfs, the minimum release required under current circumstances. The CVP is contemplating a reduction in flows from Shasta and Folsom reservoirs.

Delta Operations Criteria:

Bay-Delta Standards for the month of February were discussed.

Operations Plan:

A template for the Year 2001 CVP/SWP Operations Plan was distributed and discussed. The Operations Plan is in its final stages of development and it is expected to be posted to the CALFED Ops email reflector by late Friday, January 19th.

Fishery Status

Salmon: Winter run salmon are at Wards Landing on the Sacramento River and are migrating downstream. Closing the Delta Cross Channel gates and reduced exports are helping to protect the salmon. Only low numbers of winter run salmon have been observed at the southern Delta diversion plants. Very few Steelhead have been observed.

Splittail: The Fish and Wildlife Service announced the comment period for splittail listing.

Delta Smelt: Below yellow light.

Agenda items for Next Meeting . . . February 21, 2000

EWA Protocols
Accounting of EWA Assets through January 2001
HOR Barrier Concerns